Native American History Month 1999

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PREFACE

LTJG Timothy A. Milton, USN, while on temporary assignment with the Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute (DEOMI), conducted the necessary research to prepare this report. This project is one of an ongoing series of reports produced by participants of the Topical Research Intern Program at DEOMI. The Institute thanks LTJG Milton for his contributions to the research efforts of DEOMI.

SCOPE

The Topical Research Intern Program provides the opportunity for Servicemembers and DoD civilian employees to work on diversity/equal opportunity projects while on a 30-day tour of duty at the Institute. During their tour, the interns use a variety of primary and secondary source materials to compile a review of data or research pertaining to an issue of importance to equal opportunity (EO) advisors and equal employment opportunity (EEO) counselors, specialists, managers, and other leaders throughout the Services. The resulting publications (such as this one) are intended as resource and educational materials and do not represent official policy statements or endorsements by the DoD or any of its agencies. The publications are posted on the DEOMI Homepage of the World Wide Web and distributed to EO/EEO personnel and selected senior officials to aid them in their duties.

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ON THE COVER

Korean War Army veteran Ted Wood, 69, an Abenaki Indian, stands in front of a group of veterans he led during grand entry ceremonies at the 1998 National Native American Veterans Powwow in Upper Marlboro, MD. (Armed Forces Press Service, Rudi Williams)

INTRODUCTION

"You [white Americans] have become a great people, and we [Indians] have scarcely a place left to spread out blankets."

Red Jacket, Chief of the Senaca
Speech to missionaries at Senaca, NY, 1805 (7:23)

In one sentence, Chief Red Jacket epitomizes the cultural posture of Indians in America with respect to their interaction with Euro-Americans. In flight from religious persecution, many of the first immigrants to America sought, not only to freely exercise inalienable rights, but to also thwart future impingement on these rights. Hence, the Land of the Free was born and within its shores men and women were granted the promise of freedom, a gift that they, as well as their descendants, would lay down their very lives to promulgate and protect. Yet there were holes in this promise, and freedom would be denied to some in this fledgling nation. Native American history exists as part of America's cultural fabric. Yet this history has been nudged to the hem of this fabric and the contributions and achievements of Native Americans are sometimes overlooked. This report includes data with respect to Native American peoples and history. Its goal is to enlighten the reader to appreciate the role of Native Americans in the history of the United States.

This publication has been compiled as a resource on the history, demographics, and contributions of Native Americans and Native Alaskans, Eskimos and Aleuts. Whereas the terms Native Americans and Native Alaskans are used inclusively, specific Indian nations and other cultural designations shall be used in the body of this report where applicable. This report includes a brief history of the Indian reservation as it relates to United States Government policy as well as the impact on Native American cultures and people from its inception to the present day. Included in the history is information on major events that occurred between Native Americans and the United States Government. There is a presentation detailing the contributions of Native American peoples in the United States military service. Finally, included in this report is demographic information--population statistics, economic and educational data, and health statistics.

HISTORICAL BACKROUND

Consider this analogy. You and your family are sitting in your living room watching television. A knock at the door reveals a friendly and intelligent visitor and his family. They are travelers and are merely looking for a place to sit. They invite themselves in and you figuring that there is plenty of room, allow them to sit in a small corner of your living room. Over time you and your family and all of your possessions and facets of your culture are now living in the bathroom while the visitors and all their friends and relatives now inhabit the remainder of your home.

Though oversimplified, this image is relevant with respect to the manner the visitors from Europe dealt with their hosts, the American Indians.

> "Before Europeans arrived [in America], Indians occupied all of what became the United States. They practiced self-government, lived in accordance with revered customs, and worshiped as they saw fit." (10:546)

With the arrival of Europeans, Native Americans saw their age-old lifestyles, autonomy over their lands, and vast numbers of their people disappear. Yet despite such dire beginnings, Indian reservations now exist as homelands providing the opportunity for tribes to preserve and foster their traditional values, beliefs, and customs. (10:546)

Federal Indian Policy has its beginnings in the years of British rule over the New World colonies as far back as the 17th century. By virtue of their small numbers, British immigrants did not have the strength to dislodge the existent Indian nations. Hence, the immigrants established borders between themselves and the more powerful Indians. The British government allowed both sides to self-rule and to maintain their own laws and customs. With the arrival of the Puritans in 1630, the policy changed.

The Puritans arrived on a mission to establish a perfect Christian society. They formed a covenant among themselves and their God to live a holy life. Outsiders were excluded, unless they opted to adapt to the Puritan community rules. Most Native Americans refused this covenant and were ostensibly considered as "accursed seed of Canaan" outside of God's law. Cotton Mather, a Puritan minister, referred to the smallpox epidemic of 1633-35 as a "remarkable and terrible stroke of God upon the natives," contending that their God sent forth the epidemic to kill the children of Satan and clear the land for his true flock. (2:23)

Smallpox and other imported diseases helped create a shift in the balance of power in favor of the European settlers. Thousands of Natives died of diseases brought by Europeans. Given this new balance of power, the Europeans migrated inland and forced the remaining Indians from these decimated tribes into small containment areas. In 1638, the Puritans set aside 1,200 acres of original Quinnipiac land to serve as containment for the Quinnipiac Nation. Quinnipiacs were subject to the jurisdiction of a British magistrate. They could not sell nor leave their allotment of land or receive foreign Indians. They were forbidden to buy guns, powder, or whiskey. Furthermore, they had to accept Christianity and reject traditional spiritual beliefs deemed Satanic by the Puritans. This was the birth of the reservation, although there was not a formal policy in place concerning the presence of Native Americans. (2:23)

INDIAN RESERVATIONS

Official colonial policy concerning Native Americans did not manifest until the formation of the United States. As early as 1805, the Federal Government proposed the relocation of Indians from land east of the Mississippi River to the West. Thomas

Jefferson initially proposed the idea shortly after the acquisition of the Louisiana Purchase in 1803. At first the United States attempted to persuade Indian nations to agree to relocation. They refused and none moved to western land. In 1830, Congress passed the Indian Removal Bill, which authorized the President to create districts in the West where eastern Indian nations could move in exchange for their eastern land. The Bill provided financial compensation and other aid for moving Indians as well as authorization for protection.

The Federal Government again attempted to gain voluntary compliance with removal indicating that it could not prevent the Indians from being subjected to state laws that made it illegal to exercise the office of chief. The Indian nations relented and the Choctaws were the first to relocate, signing a removal treaty in the fall of 1830, and moving over three successive winters. (1:1130-1131)

MAJOR EVENTS

Known historically as the Trail of Tears, the Choctaw removal met with significant misfortune. Record cold temperatures and a cholera epidemic caused great loss of life. Government rations were not sufficient to sustain the migrants during the trek. Moreover, rations promised for the first year upon arrival to the West did not come or were spoiled. This problem was attributed to corruption in the government supply system. Over 2,500 people died during the entire Choctaw removal, primarily due to exposure and malnutrition. The Creeks and Cherokees did not fare any better with similar conditions prevalent during their removals. Terms of these removals included new, permanent borders for the moving Indian nations. Yet in 1854, the Federal Government relocated Indians again, this time to Oklahoma, in preparation to open Kansas and Nebraska to settlement. Interrupted by the Civil War, the process resumed soon afterwards. (1:1301)

During the period following the Civil War, the United States engaged in perhaps its most aggressive campaign to contain the Indians within the federally established Indian districts, now known as reservations. Deadly military confrontations transpired with the expressed purpose of keeping Indians on reservation land. One of the most gruesome was at Wounded Knee, South Dakota, on December 29, 1890. Nearly 300 Sioux men, women, and children were gunned down by U.S. Army troops. The massacre stands as perhaps the clearest incident of soldiers exterminating unarmed American Indians. Campaigns like this were also carried out against other Indian nations including the Cheyenne, Arapaho, Navajo, Comanche, and Apache nations. (1:1407-1410)

Indians housed on reservations found their autonomy subjected to extensive restrictions. Reservation police were stationed on reservation land; the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) had offices established to monitor Indian activities; and a Court of Indian Offices was placed on many reservations to undo traditional Indian methods of resolving disputes. Whereas the Federal Government expected the Indians to convert to Christianity, the BIA often called upon the reservation police, and even U.S. troops, to

thwart religious ceremonies, sometimes arresting Indian healers. Moreover, missionaries operated on reservations with federal permission, sometimes with federal funds. (10:546)

GOVERNMENT POLICY

Arguably, the most devastating federal blow to Native Americans was the passage of the General Allotment Act and the Curtis Act in the last part of the 19th century. The process of allotment divided reservation lands into individual homesteads. Once the land was allotted to tribal members, surplus tracts were sold to non-Indians. Congress later facilitated the sale of these tracts by amending the allotment acts. Many Indian nations lost most of their land and often reservation residents were forced to sell their allotments to pay delinquent taxes, mortgages, or for income, leaving many Indians landless. In fact, reservation land holdings dwindled from 138 million acres in 1887 to 48 million in 1934. (10:546) Currently, Native Americans hold 52 million acres of land. (10:10)

The federal allotment policy largely dissolved tribal power. Indians with land allotments had to deal with federal agents outside the scope of tribal government, leaving outsiders to handle many issues traditionally influenced by tribal leaders. Many Native Americans were pressured to move from traditional towns to isolated allotments, where they often faced racial antagonism and discrimination from new owners of surplus tract land. Many Indians left the reservation lands in search of work. The Federal Government disassembled tribal cultures by breaking up of Indian land and not until the 1930s did the government attempt to undo the tremendous cultural and social damage done by the allotment policy. John Collier, commissioner of the BIA under President Franklin D. Roosevelt, spearheaded many policies that sought to restore tribal sovereignty displaced by allotment policy.

The Indian Reorganization Act (IRA) was passed in 1934, discontinuing the allotment policy. The IRA allowed reservation residents to form autonomous governments and practice traditional culture and religion. The IRA provided federal funds to promote economic development, which enabled tribal governments to purchase land that they lost during the allotment era.

It was evident that through federal intervention to dismantle the allotment policy and its effects, Native Americans were on a road to economic, social, and cultural recovery. However, the IRA was not a universal remedy for the Indians' socio-economic condition. Poverty, poor housing, and health problems spawned by allotment era reforms still continued. Indians' standard of living was far inferior to that of the rest of the American population. Many politicians attributed this imbalance to Indian nations' dependence on the Federal Government and believed that their status as Indian was the biggest impediment to their progress. By removing the federal designation of Indian and the policies inherent therein, the Native Americans would be propelled out of poverty, ending special programs by the government and Indians' reliance on that treatment. (10:546-548)

The 1950s brought the House Concurrent Resolution 108, or Termination Policy. Just as the name suggests, the policy ended the U.S. government's management of Indian affairs. The government purchased land and resources from Indian nations and distributed the proceeds to the individual members. So while they had liquid assets, they were now without land or community. Most of the land acquired by the sales found its way to private sector owners, out of Indian hands. Rich in natural resources, the land was often leased for logging or mining purposes. Otherwise, it was sold outright. Additionally, Congress set up the Indian Claims Commission (ICC) to pay Native Americans for lands illegally acquired. Senator Arthur B. Watkins, the major proponent of the Termination Policy, explained the function of the ICC: to settle all obligations with the Indians--real or purported--thus paving the way for complete freedom of the Indians and no further affiliation with the Federal Government.

Between 1953 and 1962, Congress terminated federal recognition of tribes as independent nations and ended federal services to 60 Indian nations. Many of these nations disappeared as organized communities. During the same period, the BIA began moving Indians to urban areas through its relocation program. Over 100,000 Native Americans were moved to large cities from rural homes between 1953 and 1972, thus isolating them from homelands, forcing them into mainstream American culture and economy, and severely compromising their identity as Indians. (1:1255-1256)

The Menominees in Wisconsin owned property valued at $34 million in 1953 when their termination bill was enacted. Once the Federal Government terminated its services in 1961, each member of the former tribe owned 100 shares of stock and a $3,000 negotiable bond in the name of a private company, Menominee Enterprises, Inc. (MEI), which held the land and businesses. Subject to state taxation, the former nation, now called Menominee County, had to raise taxes to pay for health services and utilities. Menominee Enterprises, Inc. required residents to purchase their homes and property. The company was the only taxable property owner in the county and needed to raise the tax money. Unemployment soared as high as in the Depression Era. With little savings, many residents sold back their $3,000 bonds to help make payments on their property. Without access to Indian Health Service medical care, health indicators were dismal, including 35% of the population afflicted with tuberculosis and an infant mortality rate three times the national average. The Menominee people were left with little more than they had before termination. Only now their land was not theirs any longer. (10:371-373)

Termination did not remove all Indians from reservation land. Rather, termination policy targeted certain Indian nations that federal officials felt should be free from special government treatment. However, nations still living on reservations were affected by termination and tribal autonomy was in grave peril. Public Law 280, passed in 1953, extended state criminal and civil law to reservations. State laws undermined tribal laws and many Indians on reservations lost the right to maintain order in their own communities. (10:548)

CURRENT SITUATION

Termination had failed reservation residents miserably. During the administrations of Presidents Kennedy and Johnson, the Federal Government moved to restore the reservations back to the autonomy, where self-governing nations could live undisturbed. Presidential initiatives extended anti-poverty programs to the reservations. Congress enabled Indian nations to contract programs for education and other services once provided by the BIA. Furthermore, Congressional legislation allowed Indian governments to have more power in child placement issues and to apply and compete for federal grant money. Indian leaders sought to take advantage of this wellspring of federal assistance and used these programs to encourage tourism and to bring industry to the reservations. (10:548)

The results of this fiscal expansion were less than successful in many cases. Federal contracts and grants had strings attached, and very often Indian governments had to spend additional money to meet conditions of the contracts. These conditions frequently superceded the priorities of the tribes. Indian nations also found it difficult to impress some businesses enough to make long-term investments in reservation ventures. The Indian introduction to mainstream business proved challenging even with extensive federal assistance. (10:548)

Again, the limited prosperity maintained by Indian nations was buffered by further government neutralization of tribal powers. Congress decreased the amount of federal assistance during the 70s and 80s, and federal resistance to Indian rights increased. Indians had no jurisdiction over non-Indians who committed crimes on reservation land. Similarly, some state agencies restricted Indian access to sacred areas located outside reservation lands. As recently as 1992, the U.S. used force to settle Indian issues by sending armed agents to an Arizona reservation to confiscate video gambling machines, ignoring tribal protests. (10:548)

Despite these hindrances, the federal position ostensibly advocates for Indian autonomy. In the words of the BIA mission statement, “Maintaining government to government relationships within the spirit of Indian self-determination.”

Today, Indian governments have tax codes, organized court systems, and legal codes. They now have profitable business endeavors including tourism and industry. They also worship in accordance with tribal customs.

Native American history is rife with irony. They have had to rebuild their cultures and lifestyles on their own land, which is less than 2% of the original area. Less than 50% of all Indians reside on or near this land that is held in trust by the Federal Government. (10:548-549)

Despite the gains made by many Indians, there are still small, landless Indian nations who have yet to capitalize on federal benefits. These nations must in some cases apply for status as a recognized tribe, proving their culture, lineage, and history, to the

same government that decimated their heritage through termination and removal policies. Through it all, Native American priorities remained consistent: improve living conditions while preserving self-government, culture, and traditional religion. Ironically, American Indians have historically met stiff opposition to live by the promises afforded to other Americans. Many Indians have yet to taste the fruits of the American dream. None will likely arrive where they once were as a people, with traditional cultures, even though their feet still stand on their own homeland.

MILITARY CONTRIBUTIONS

"A warrior I have been. Now it is all over. A hard time I have." Chief Sitting Bull, 'Song of Sitting Bull' (25:58)

Despite the tumultuous history of Native Americans and their interaction with Whites, Indians have demonstrated resolute patriotism. Their valor in battle goes as far back as the War of 1812, through both World Wars, and every United States campaign and operation up to the present day. During the twentieth century Native American military veterans possess the noblest record of service, per capita, when compared to other ethnic groups. (9:227-230, 235) Approximately one in four Native American men are veterans. (28:69) American Indians have contributed, and continue to serve, with valor and distinction once again in defense of their homelands, this time as an integral part of the United States Armed Forces.

American military leaders recognized the courage and tenacity of Native Americans in combat as far back as the 18th century. Indian soldiers served in the War of 1812 and on both sides in the Civil War as auxiliary troops. Particularly proficient in scouting the enemy, American Indians were enlisted as part of the Indian Scouts, established by the U.S. Army in 1866. Operating primarily in the American West in the late 1800s through the early 1900s, the Indian Scouts were active in many U.S. battles, including the 1916 expeditions to Mexico under General John J. Pershing in pursuit of Poncho Villa. The last member retired from the Army in 1947, and the Indian Scouts were deactivated. The Rough Riders, under Theodore Roosevelt, recruited heavily from the American Indian population. They saw battle in Cuba during the Spanish-American War in 1898. Having proved their abilities and courage on the side of the United States, American Indians were poised at the brink of a much larger role in American military service entering the 20th century. (7:9)

An estimated 12,000 American Indians participated in World War I as part of the United States military. Most notable were those who served with the 142nd Infantry of the 36th Texas-Oklahoma National Guard Division. Over 600 Choctaw and Cherokee soldiers from Oklahoma served with the 142nd, which fought in France. Four Indian members of the 142nd received the *Croix de Guerre* and others received the Church War Cross for gallantry. (6:2-3)

In 1924 American Indians were given citizenship, thus making them eligible for conscription. Yet the draft was not solely responsible for Native American participation in World War II. Over 25,000 Indians served in both theaters of war, European and Pacific, between 1941 and 1945. (9:227-230) Additionally, Native American men and women worked in ordnance depots, factories, and other war industries on the home front. The Indian servicemembers receiving the most notoriety during World War II were the code talkers.

In 1942, Navajo Indians were recruited into the United States Marine Corps to function as cryptologic communicators: they transmitted orders, tactical information, and other vital information in their native language over phone lines. The Navajo language, unwritten with no alphabet or symbology, is extremely complex. Its syntax, dialects, and tonal qualities make it almost impossible to learn or decipher without extensive exposure and training. The Navajo Marines entered basic training at Camp Pendleton, California, and created the Navajo code--a dictionary of code words of military terms in the Navajo language. This dictionary and the code words had to be memorized during training. These Marines were deployed to the Pacific Theater. The Japanese never deciphered the Marine code in the Navajo format.

The valor and dedication of Native Americans was further visible in the decorations received in battle: 71 Air Medals, 51 Silver Stars, 47 Bronze Stars, and 34 Distinguished Flying Crosses. (6:3-4) The bravery of Native American servicemembers is further encapsulated in the honors bestowed upon First Lieutenant Jack C. Montgomery, First Lieutenant Ernest Childers, and Second Lieutenant Van Barfoot, all Native American recipients of the Congressional Medal of Honor for battlefield valor in World War II. In all, six servicemembers of Native American descent have been honored with the Medal of Honor since the first World War, to include U.S. Army Brigadier General Kenneth N. Walker, U.S. Army Corporal Mitchell Red Cloud, Jr., and U.S. Army Private First Class Charles George. (18)

SOME NOTABLE AMERICAN INDIANS WHO SERVED IN THE U.S. MILITARY

An airman of Osage ancestry, **Clarence L. Tinker** lost his life during World War II while on a combat mission during the Japanese attack on Midway Island in the Pacific, June 7, 1942. During the 1920s he entered the Air Service and graduated from flight training. In 1927 he was named commandant of the Air Corps Advanced Flying School at Kelly Field, Texas. The 1930s saw Tinker as commander of various pursuit and bombardment units. In May 1940 he was promoted to brigadier general.

After the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor, Tinker was appointed commander of the Air Forces in Hawaii to reorganize the air defenses of the islands. In January 1942 he was advanced to major general. In early June 1942 the Japanese began their assault of Midway Island, and on 7 June, General Tinker elected to lead a force of early model B-24s against the retreating Japanese naval forces. Near Midway Island his went out of control and plunged into the sea. General Tinker and eight crewmen perished. On

October 14, 1942 the Oklahoma City Air Depot was named Tinker Field in his honor. It is now Tinker Air Force Base. (24)

On July 17, 1898, **Kenneth N. Walker** was born in Cerillos, New Mexico, a small town south of Santa Fe. His mother, Emma, was the granddaughter of Newton Overturf and Mary Alice Wade who had married just after the Civil War. Mary Alice was a Cherokee Indian who reportedly spoke no English. Kenneth joined the U.S. Army in 1917 and entered the Air Service to learn to fly. After attending the Air Corps Tactical School in 1928 he became the leading proponent of the primacy of bomber aircraft and the doctrine of strategic bombardment of an enemy's ability to wage war. Walker had the opportunity to test his views at the beginning of World War II. Assigned to Major General George Kenney's command as commander of the 5th Bomber Command, Walker, now a brigadier general, worked tirelessly to improve the skills of his pilots. For an attack on the Japanese forces at Rabaul on the island of New Britain, General Walker joined the crew of one of the lead B-17s.

The Medal of Honor citation awarded to General Walker reads: "in the face of extremely heavy antiaircraft fire and determined opposition by enemy fighters he led an effective daylight bombing attack against shipping in the harbor...which resulted in direct hits on 9 enemy vessels." His aircraft, however, was badly damaged and was last seen with one engine on fire being pursued by Japanese fighters. In addition to the Medal of Honor, General Walker received the Distinguished Service Cross, Legion of Merit, World War II Victory Medal, the American Defense Service Medal, the American Theater Medal, and the Asia-Pacific Theater Medal. (3:472-473)

SOME NATIVE AMERICANS CURRENTLY ON ACTIVE DUTY

Major General George T. Stringer is Deputy Assistant Secretary (Budget), Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Air Force (Financial Management and Comptroller), Washington, DC. As the senior Air Force budget officer, he is responsible for planning and directing formulation of annual Air Force budgets totaling more than $73 billion. He leads a staff of civilian and military budget professionals that develop, integrate and defend the Air Force budget requests to the Office of the Secretary of Defense, Office of Management and Budget, and Congress. With approved appropriations, he is responsible for management and execution of the process and funding that supports Air Force priorities and direction of the Secretary of Defense and Congress. (12)

Major General Susan L. Pamerleau is the Director of Personnel Force Management, Deputy Chief of Staff, Personnel, Headquarters U.S. Air Force, Washington, DC. As the director, she is responsible for ensuring personnel policies and strategic objectives are integrated in the development and establishment of policies, plans, and programs for civilian and military utilization, classification, promotions, evaluation, retention, separations, and retirements. In addition, she is responsible for all

aspects of force management including readiness and joint issues, civilian regionalization, diversity management, future systems, and rated force management. (13)

Brigadier General Wilbert D. "Doug" Pearson, Jr., is Director of Operations, Headquarters Air Force Materiel Command, Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio. He is responsible for the command's test policy and resource allocation, flight management, aircraft control services, weather services, and command post operations. He also serves as the test mission headquarters' focal point for three Air Force test centers: Air Force Flight Test Center, Edwards Air Force Base, California; Air Force Developmental Test Center, Eglin Air Force Base, Florida; and Arnold Engineering Development Center, Arnold Air Force Base, Tennessee. (11)

Native American bravery has been an integral part of every American military conflict. Most Indian nations have cultural values, such as warrior traditions, strength, and honor that drive them to courageous deeds in defense of our country. United States military service provides an outlet for Native Americans to fulfill a cultural purpose rooted in tradition: to fight and defend their homeland. This purpose is particularly important since it comes when young people of the tribe are normally not old enough to assume a leadership role in their traditional culture. The cultural expectation to be a warrior is an important step in gaining status in Native America culture. Native American warriors once fought against the United States in defense of their lands. America ironically owes a debt of gratitude to the Native American warrior tradition, which continues into the 21st century, as Native Americans serve with pride, courage, and distinction.

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

There are limitations in much of the data presented here. The United States Census Bureau reports much of its information for American Indians, Eskimos, and Aleuts inclusively. Additionally, the Census Bureau constantly updates most of its demographic information. However, these updated figures are estimates. The actual figures are produced via the decennial census. Updated information may be obtained at the following World Wide Web sites:

http://www.doi.gov/bureau-indian-affairs.html
Bureau of Indian Affairs
http://www.census.gov/
United States Census Bureau
http://www.tucson.ihs.gov/
Indian Health Service
http://phs.os.dhhs.gov/
Department of Health and Human Services

Differing Definitions

The definition of what constitutes "Native American" is complex and varies among different U.S. Government Departments and Bureaus. Depending on the particular organization, determination of Native American status can either be very complex or as simple as personal choice:

- The Department of Defense, in accordance with DoD Directive 1350.2, defines a Native American or Native Alaskan as a person having origins in the original peoples of North America, and who maintains cultural identification through tribal affiliation or community recognition. (5:2-2)

- The United States Bureau of the Census recognizes anyone who declares him/herself of Native American descent as Native American. (26:4)

- The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) requires that in order to be designated as a Native American, you must:

    1) be at a minimum, one-quarter Native American.
    2) live in or in the vicinity of trust lands.
    3) be listed on a tribal roll list recognized by the Federal Government.
    4) trace ancestry three (3) generations.
    5) be approved by BIA services. (28:12)

- Additionally, individual tribes have their own distinct methods of establishing Native American identity. (28:12)

Population

People identifying themselves as Native American numbered 1,959,234, according to the 1990 Census. This includes American Indians (1,878,285), Eskimos (57,152), and Aleuts (23,797), representing 0.8% of the total U.S. population of 248,709,873. In the year 2000, the U.S. Census Bureau estimated the U.S. population at approximately 274,634,000. The estimated Native American population in 2000, to include American Indians, Eskimos, and Aleuts, is 2,402,000. (2:101-102; 26:25)

As of January 1993, the Bureau of Indian Affairs recognized 557 tribes, including 318 in the 48 contiguous states and 197 tribal entities in Alaska. (28:32)

In 1990, the highest concentration of Native Americans was in the state of Oklahoma (252,000). The next highest concentrations were in California, 242,000; Arizona, 204,000; New Mexico, 134,000; and Alaska, 86,000. (9:37)

As of April 1998, the five tribes with the greatest populations were Cherokee, 308,132; Navajo, 219,198; Chippewa, 103,826; Sioux, 103,255; and Choctaw, 82,299. (27:53)

The largest reservation area is the Navajo Reservation, which covers 14 to 15 million acres of trust land in Arizona, Utah, and New Mexico. The smallest reservation is believed to be the Sheep Ranch Rancheria near Sacramento, CA, which is slightly more than nine tenths of an acre. (28:111)

Economic Issues

Between 1997 and 2010, the number of American Indian, Eskimo, and Aleut households in the United States is projected to climb from 713,397 to 906,036. (14:4)

In 1990, American Indian, Eskimo, and Aleut households totaled 449,281. Of these family households, 68.5% consisted of married couples, 26.2% women with no husband present, and 8% men with no wife present. The median household income in 1989 was $19,000 for American Indians, Eskimos and Aleuts. Over 27% of these families were below the poverty level. (27:53)

The number of businesses owned by American Indians and Alaska Natives in the United States increased 93% between 1987 and 1992, from 52,980 to 102,271. The rate of increase for all U.S. firms was 26% with 13.7 million in 1987 growing to 17.3 million in 1992. In 1992, the United States had 95,040 American Indian-owned, 2,738 Aleut-owned and 4,493 Eskimo-owned firms. (15)

Receipts for the nation's American Indian and Alaska Native-owned businesses increased 115% from 1987 to 1992 ($3.7 billion to $8.1 billion). Receipts for all U.S. firms during the same period grew by 67% ($2 trillion to $3.3 trillion). (15)

In 1992, American Indians operated 8,346 of the nation's 1.9 million farms. While the total number of farms in the United States declined between 1987 and 1992, the number operated by American Indians climbed by 1,212. (23:1-3)

Land is by far the major natural resource controlled by Native Americans. Native Americans control 52 million acres of land. Tribal lands consist of 42 million acres. Private individuals own the remaining 10 million acres. (10:10)

Mineral resource development provides significant income to tribes and individual Indians who have chosen to develop those resources. Historically, the economic return to the Indian mineral owner from development of mineral resources has been between 75 and 85% of the lease income generated on Indian Trust lands. Nationwide income from leasing of oil and gas on Indian lands has been decreasing since 1983, but is showing signs of resurgence. (21)

In 1996, Indian Trust lands generated income from mineral leases, mainly from oil, gas, and coal. Roughly 10% of U.S. coal reserves lie on Native American lands. (22)

Education

According to the 1990 Census, 65.6% of Indians aged 25 and older have a high school diploma. Additionally, 9.4% have a bachelor's degree or higher.

The U.S. Census Bureau estimates that in 1995, 54,800 American Indian men and 76,500 American Indian women were enrolled full time in college. Of these, 120,700 were undergraduates, 8,500 were graduate students, and 2,100 were in professional schools.

In 1994, an estimated 4,975 Native Americans earned Associate's degrees, comprising .9% of the total degrees conferred. Additionally, they earned 6,189 Bachelor's degrees (0.5%), 1,697 Master's degrees (0.4%), 134 Doctorates (0.3%), and 371 Professional degrees (0.3%). (17:51, 81, 194)

In 1988, the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) operated 103 educational facilities, including boarding schools, and funded another 65 through contracts. (4:86-87)

There are 24 tribal colleges and community colleges. These colleges are located in North Dakota, South Dakota, Michigan, Montana, New Mexico, Minnesota, Arizona, Nebraska, Washington, and Wisconsin. These colleges are different from traditional American colleges in three ways:

- Each provides a curriculum that celebrates the traditional Indian culture of its students.
- Tribal colleges offer training for tribal needs.
- These colleges sponsor research and development programs that directly benefit their reservations. (4:649-651)

Health

Members of federally recognized Indian tribes and their descendants are eligible for services provided by the Indian Health Service (IHS). The IHS is an agency of the U.S. Public Health Service and the Department of Health and Human Services. The IHS operates a comprehensive health services system for approximately 1.5 million of the nation's two million American Indians and Alaska Natives. (19)

In 1992-1994, the birth rate for American Indians and Alaska Natives was 25.6 live births per 1,000 people, 65% greater than the U.S. all races birth rate of 15.5 live births and 74% higher than the rate for the U.S. White population. (20:39,47)

The American Indian infant mortality rate was 8.7 per 1,000 live births in 1992-94 (10.9 when adjusted for miscoding of race), a drop of 61% from the 22.2% twenty years prior. For some death statistics, the figures are adjusted for miscoding of Indian race on death certificates and may affect some figures and percentages. Despite the discrepancy, this rate is still 30% higher than the all races rate of 8.4 in 1993. (20:47)

In 1992-94, of the reported American Indian/Alaska Native live births, 5.9% were of low birth weight (under 2,500 grams), virtually the same as the White population (6.0 in 1993). The U.S. all races population was higher at 7.2% in 1993. (20:40)

High birth weight births (over 4,000 grams), a complication of diabetic pregnancies, are a greater problem for American Indian women than low weight births as compared to the United States all races population. In 1992-94, 12.5% of reported live births were of high birth weight, compared to 10.5% for the all races population in 1993. (20:41)

For the American Indian population, 45% of mothers were under the age of 20 when they had their first child. Additionally, 20% were at least age 25. For the White population, 21% of mothers were under age 20, and 49% were at least 25 years of age. For the U.S. all races population, 24% were under age 20 and 46% were at least age 25. (20:42-43)

The maternal mortality rate for American Indians and Alaska Natives dropped from 27.7 (per 100,000 live births) in 1972-74 to 4.0 in 1992-94, representing an 86% improvement. In 1993 those rates for the White and all races populations were 4.8 and 7.5, respectively. Rates for all groups improved during the 22-year time frame; however, none as dramatically as those rates for American Indians and Alaska Natives. (20:45)

The leading causes of death for Indian males in 1992-94 were heart diseases, accidents, malignant neoplasms, chronic liver disease and cirrhosis, and suicide. For women, they were heart diseases, malignant neoplasms, accidents, diabetes mellitus, and cerebrovascular diseases. (20:64)

CONCLUSION

Native Americans are a culturally rich group that continues to endeavor through both adversities and achievements. As we approach the next millennium, it important to reflect on the history of all groups who form America. This report is a means of broadening our understanding and awareness of Native Americans' history and contributions to the nation.

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